REMARKS

Claims 8-11 and 16-32 are currently pending in the present patent application. In an Advisory Action mailed 31 May 2005, the Examiner maintained his rejections of all these claim under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 5,946,217 to Lhoest ("Lhoest") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,522,309 to Mizobuchi *et al.* ("Mizobuchi") and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,788,980B1 to Johnson ("Johnson").

Amended claim 8 recites an assembly for electronically controlling the input of solution to multiple solution receptacles. The assembly includes a solution reservoir and a solution receptacle feeder attached to the solution reservoir. A computer is capable of generating an electronic signal having an address component identifying the solution receptacle feeder and an instruction component indicating a continuous volume of the solution to be delivered to the solution reservoir. The instruction component has a value indicating the continuous volume to be delivered. A transceiver is capable of sending and receiving the electronic signal.

The Mizobuchi patent discloses amounts delivered in predetermined amounts as previously discussed. For example, liquids stored in the first processing devices 110 and 100 are transferred in predetermined amounts to the second processing device 120 by means of pipes 112 and 113. *See, e.g.,* col. 12, lines 52-58. "Predetermined amounts of liquid materials are [then] introduced into the compartment of the first carrier vessel 201 through a quantitative filling device." *Id.* at 59-62. Processed products in the compartments of the first carrier vessels 210 are introduced into the second carrier vessel 220 of Figure 2. *See* column 14, lines 30-44. These processed products are introduced into the introduction device 300 and "predetermined amounts thereof are introduced into the compartments of the second carrier vessels 220 by a quantitative device and a filling device of [the] introduction device in the same way as in the first carrier vessels 210." *Id.* Only predetermined amounts are delivered in the system of Mizobuchi, in contrast to any amount defined by the instruction component of the electronic signal recited in claim 8.

Even if combined, Lhoest and Mizobuchi neither disclose nor suggest an assembly as recited in amended claim 8. Lhoest does not disclose or suggest generating an electronic signal that identifies a feeder for filling a container and that

indicates the volume of solution to be delivered to that container. The Examiner asserts Mizobuchi "teaches using a control system that controls carrier vessels, such as those used in Lhoest's system, to issue instructions including type and quantity of material to be mixed to obtain a final product." *See* Section 3 of Final Office Action mailed 24 March 2005. Amended claim 8 expressly recites the computer generates an electronic signal having an instruction component indicating a continuous volume of the solution to be delivered to the solution reservoir. The instruction component has a value indicating the continuous volume to be delivered. The value of the instruction component is thus set to provide the desired "continuous volume" to be delivered, and may be set to any value. The term "continuous volume" should not be considered as being limited to a continuous analog value but includes, for example, a digital representation of a desired value that changes in discrete amounts as defined by the weight of a least significant bit in the digital representation. Mizobuchi simply does not disclose an electronic signal having such an instruction component.

As evidenced from the discussion of Mizobuchi set forth above, Mizobuchi discloses delivering only predetermined amounts of a liquid. This predetermined amount is set by the sizes of the containers. Thus, to get a desired overall volume in Mizobuchi the same signal would be activated a number of times to provide N times the predetermined volume in each container to achieve the desired overall volume. Mizobuchi does not disclose or suggest a signal including an instruction component having a value indicating a continuous volume of solution to be delivered. In fact, Mizobuchi may be viewed as teaching away from such an instruction component since with the approach of utilizing containers for delivering predetermined amounts such an instruction component is unnecessary.

For these reasons, amended claim 8 is allowable over Lhoest and Mizobuchi, whether taken singly or in combination. Moreover, the undersigned maintains that there is no suggestion/motivation to combine Lhoest and Mizobuchi. Lhoest is directed to a facility for transporting containers and identifying the contents of such containers as they are being transported, and is not concerned with the filling such containers. Tracking and transporting such containers is a different problem than supplying contents to such containers. While the contents of the containers in Lhoest will eventually be dispensed, the same is true of any container and its contents. There is no motivation to combine Lhoest and Mizobuchi.

Amended independent claims 16 and 21 are allowable for reasons similar to those just discussed with regard to claim 8. All claims dependent on independent claims 8, 16, and 21 are allowable for the same reasons as the associated independent claim and because of the additional limitations added by the dependent claims.

Amended claim 27 recites a method of providing liquid to a plurality of liquid receptacles. The method includes identifying a particular liquid receptacle to which liquid is to be provided and generating an electronic signal including an address component and an instruction component. The instruction component is a function of the identified liquid receptacle and includes volume information having a continuous value indicating a volume of liquid to be provided. The method determines whether the address component has a particular value and when the address component has the particular value, provides the liquid to the liquid receptacle as a function of the instruction component.

According to the recited method, depending on the identified liquid receptacle different liquids may be supplied. In contrast, there is no suggestion in Mizobuchi that liquid is provided from a given source as a function of the identified container. Instead, Mizobuchi routes the containers to required sources to obtain the desired liquid. The approach in Mizobuchi could therefore be considered as teaching away from the recited operation of providing liquid as a function of the identified container. Furthermore, Mizobuchi deals only with predetermined amounts as previously discussed and therefore does not disclose an electronic signal having an instruction component that includes volume information having a continuous value indicating a volume of liquid to be delivered. Accordingly, the combination of elements recited in amended claim 27 is allowable and dependent claims 28-32 are allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 27 and due to the additional limitations added by these claims.

The present patent application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and a Notice of Allowance are respectfully requested. The Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the number listed below for a telephone interview if, upon consideration of this amendment, the Examiner determines any pending claims are not in condition for allowance.

Dated this 25th day of July, 2005.

Respectfully submitted,

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